

Application No. 09/960,260
Amendment AF dated OCTOBER 4, 2006
Reply to Final Office Action dated August 15, 2006

Amendments to the Drawings

The attached replacement sheets of drawings include a new Figure 2A. Support for this figure can be found, for example, in originally filed claim 18. As such, this drawing is not new matter.

Attachment: Twelve Replacement Drawing Sheets

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed the Final Office Action dated August 15, 2006. Claims 1-31 were pending in the application, claims 9-11, 13, 16, 17, 19 and 20 had been withdrawn from consideration, claims 1-8, 12, 14, 15, 21-24 and 29 had been rejected, and claims 18, 25-28, 30 and 31 have been allowed. With this Response, claims 1-17, 19-24 and 29 have been cancelled from the application. As such, only the allowed claims remain in the application. The claims have been cancelled without prejudice, and applicants do not necessarily agree with the rejection of these claims.

Double Patenting

Claims 1-8 and 15 have been provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-8 and 16 of co-pending Application No. 10/244,870. While the Applicants may not necessarily agree with this rejection, claims 1-8 and 15 have been cancelled from the current application, rendering this rejection moot. Applicants respectfully assert that the remaining claims are in condition for allowance.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). It was asserted in the Office Action that the drawings do not show each and every element of claims 18, 25 and 28. Specifically, it was asserted that the drawings do not show the “or more” aspect of these claims. Although Applicants do not agree with this objection, in order to advance prosecution a new drawing, Figure 2A, has been presented with this Response. Support for this drawing can be found, for example, in originally filed claim 18. As such, this drawing is not new matter.

Amendments to the Specification

Please see the Amendments to the Specification section above for the details of these amendments. The amended portions of the specification accommodate Figure 2A. Again, support for this subject matter can be found, for example, in the originally filed claim 18, and as such these amendments are not new matter.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C §112

Claim 29 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. This claim has been cancelled, rendering this rejection moot. Applicants respectfully assert that the remaining claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C §102

Claims 1-8, 12, 14, 15, 21-24 and 29 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Diettrich, U.S. Patent No. 3,720,210. These claims have been cancelled. Again, Applicants do not necessarily agree with this rejection, but cancel the claims only to advance prosecution of this application. Applicants respectfully assert that the remaining claims are in condition for allowance.

Allowable Claims

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 18, 25-28, 30 and 31 are allowable over the prior art of record. Because these are the only claims that remain in the application, Applicants respectfully assert that all claims are in condition for allowance.

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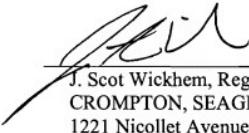
Conclusion

Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Issuance of a Notice of Allowance in due course is requested. If a telephone conference might be of assistance, please contact the undersigned attorney at (612) 677-9050.

Respectfully submitted,
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By their attorney,

Date: October 4, 2006



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